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## **DCF Secretary Eloise Anderson Unveils New Resource for Working Parents**

MADISON – Today an important new resource for working parents was unveiled and a state-wide public awareness campaign was kicked-off by Department of Children and Families Secretary Eloise Anderson. The Department of Children and Families (DCF) launched the new YoungStar website, giving parents information on the quality of care being provided by child care providers throughout Wisconsin. With this new tool, parents can be confident in making the best choice for their child.

“Parents in Wisconsin can now quickly and easily access information about child care providers by ‘looking for the stars.’ The Department of Children and Families designed YoungStar with parents in mind to help them select the best provider for their children,” said Anderson. “Parents want to know their children are safe and secure, as well as gaining the knowledge and social skills that set the stage for a successful tomorrow.”

YoungStar rates child care providers based on education, learning environment, business practices and the health and well-being of children. Providers will be evaluated annually and given a rating from 1 to 5 stars – with 5 stars being the highest rating. On the YoungStar web site, [www.youngstar.wi.gov](http://www.youngstar.wi.gov), parents can view star ratings, health and safety issues, and accreditations for providers in their area. Nearly 1,700 providers have been rated since January, and more are added to the website every week. The tool will help parents be more confident when choosing a child care provider.

“Now in addition to talking with other parents and consulting with child care resource and referral programs, parents will have clear, concise information about the quality of providers,” stated Anderson. “Through YoungStar, we will improve the quality of child care across the state to help our children get off to a promising start while providing parents with priceless piece of mind.”

YoungStar not only raises the bar for Wisconsin child care providers; it provides an incentive to further develop the quality of their child care programs. YoungStar providers have access to training opportunities for their staff and technical assistance for their program. YoungStar technical consultants work with YoungStar providers to identify areas to improve and to make changes that increase the quality of care. Micro-grants are available to help providers purchase items such as books and learning materials.

The launch of the YoungStar website and YoungStar Public Awareness Campaign continues DCF's efforts to ensure that all families have access to high quality, affordable early care and education. YoungStar links child care quality to payments from the Wisconsin Shares program, makes it easier for parents to choose the best care for their children, and helps child care providers improve.

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